

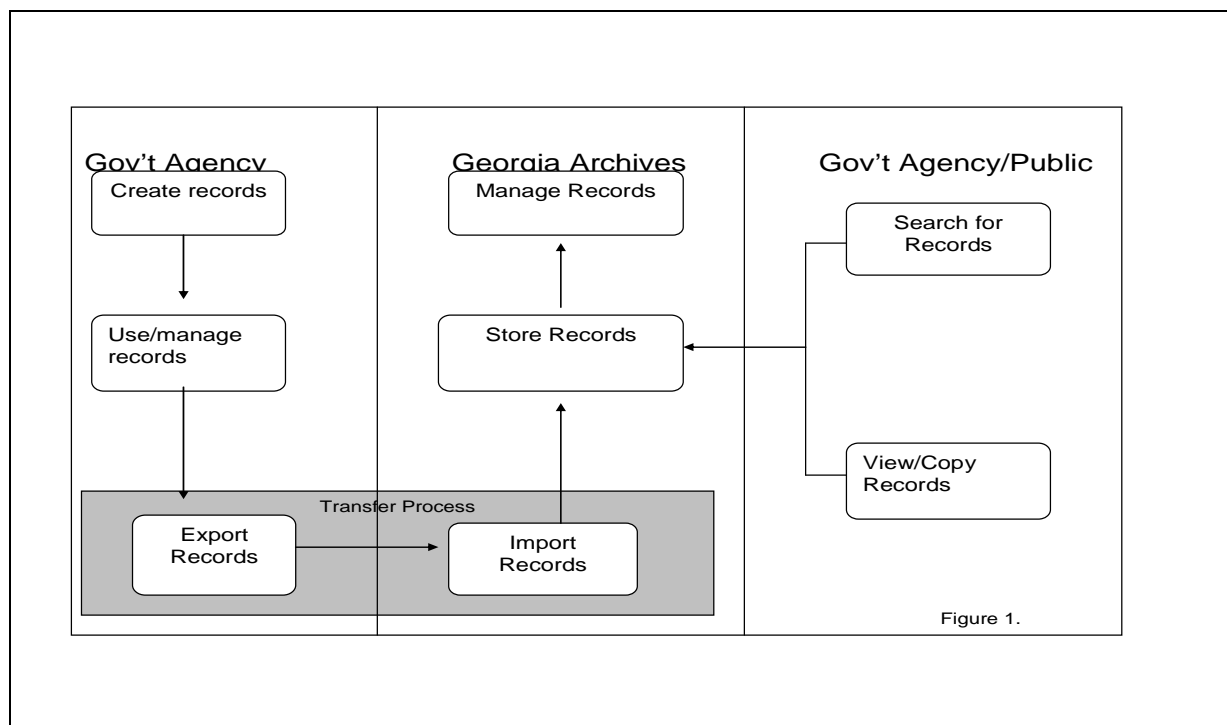
The Transfer Process within DAG

The success of the digital transfer of permanent records from government agencies to the DAG relies on strong relationships between the Georgia Archives and the client agencies – partly to support effective work planning, but also to ensure minimal errors during the transfer process.

Overall, the process contains six large steps:

- A government agency agrees to transfer its permanent records to the DAG, and agency systems are assessed for compliance with relevant standards (pre-transfer)
- Agency physically copies records and sends to DAG's external inbox (transfer)
- Archives-ready records are checked for viruses and for compliance with standards (checks)
- Archives-ready records are moved through DAG's quarantine and processing areas (quarantine and processing)
- Archives-ready records are moved into permanent storage (storage)
- Archives accepts custody, and transferring agency is notified (transfer of custody)

Figure 1 (below) represents a conceptual map of the overall transfer process.



Pre-Transfer

Before an agency's first transfer, Archives staff will have had extensive contact with the agency and will have evaluated its record keeping system to reappraise the records and verify the permanent designation, to identify any confidentiality concerns, and to gather technical information needed to ensure a successful transfer. At this time, the Archives and agency will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing a regular cycle of transfer. The MOU will function as the accession record, thus allowing the agency to send records to the Archives in small batches rather than in large shipments. Upon signing the MOU, a destination folder will be created in DAG's external inbox to receive records and the agency will be provided a logon to access the folder.

Prior to all transfers, the Archives will complete several additional preparatory steps to:

- Review proposed accession of records, to ascertain that they will be transferred to the Archives in accordance with an approved retention schedule
- Establish an agreement with the agency outlining access provisions and including the Archives initial data collection sheet which gathers key technical and context information from the agency
- Verify the existence of or update context information -- an authority name and administrative history of the agency among other items -- within the DAG system
- Test sample records to ensure that they comply with standards and contain appropriate metadata
- Create destination folders in DAG's internal inbox
- Finalize arrangements for access to the records when in Archives custody

Transfer

Once the pre-transfer evaluation is complete, the agency sends its records to DAG. The records can be sent either online or on physical media such as a CD.

The records are transferred as part of a set or accretion to an accession. The Archives will provide feedback on any errors associated with the transferred records.

Online transfer

The external inbox to which records are sent is located outside the Archives firewalls, ensuring that Archives systems are protected from viruses and unauthorized entry. The transferring agency will have been assigned a unique destination folder and password which allow the copying of records to the appropriate location in the inbox.

Media transfer

Records may also be transferred on physical media, such as a CD. Once received, Archives staff will copy the contents of the media items into the internal inbox and will then activate the next step in the process.

Figure 2

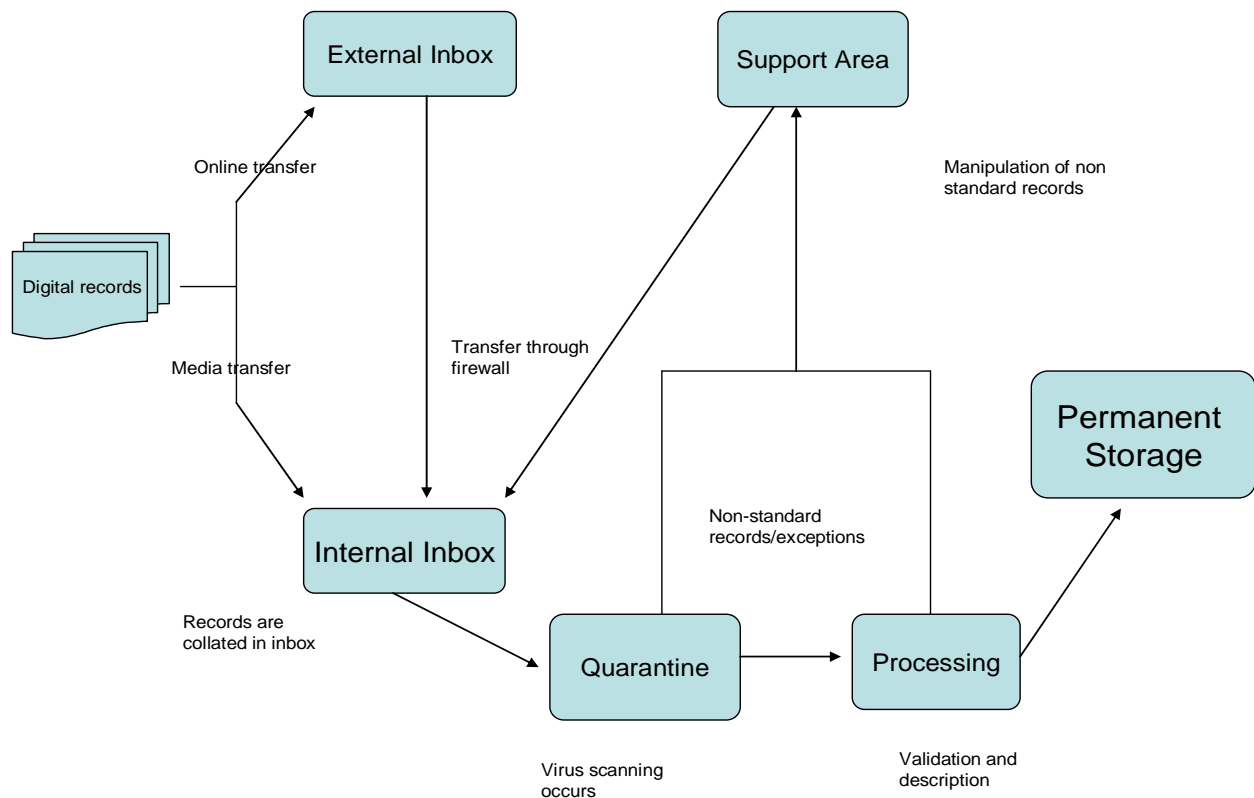


Figure 2 provides a simple overview of the way records will be taken into custody.

Ingest

Whether sent online or as files on physical media, the records are moved into DAG's internal inbox. At this point, the system performs a number of checks, including the following:

- Virus checking
- Checking that all transferred records are not duplicates of records already in DAG
- Checking that transferred records are valid records with all appropriate metadata

Records that fail these checks are moved into the support area. Here objects can be fixed (if the solution is a simple one) or deleted from the system. In the latter case, the transferring agency will be notified of the errors and asked to resend the records.

Quarantine and Processing

Those records that pass the critical checks will be quarantined for one month (20 days), after which time the records are rechecked with the latest versions of virus-checking software. Following quarantine, the records are moved into the processing area.

Records that have failed minor checks are now grouped into error folders. The tools developed for the processing area allow staff to undertake the following steps:

- Conduct complex searches, including searching by one or many metadata elements or searching across all data in DAG.
- Group records according to search criteria
- Review records with minor errors
- Correct errors and anomalies in records in accordance with business rules based on archival principles

Entry into Permanent Storage

Once processing of the records is complete the archivist responsible authorizes their move into permanent storage in the digital repository. The system then rechecks these records, to again ensure that they are valid and contain the appropriate metadata, and in each case captures additional preservation metadata to document any changes made since transfer.

Transfer of Custody

Once a record has entered permanent storage, a message is sent to the transferring agency to advise it that the Archives has accepted custody of the record. The record may then be deleted from the agency system, and the Archives takes responsibility for maintaining the master or 'official record' in perpetuity.